

# Hailsworth Urban District Council.

## ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

## MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH.

1904.

28th JANUARY, 1905.

Gentlemen,—

I beg to present my fourth Annual Report on the Sanitary Administration of this District, now in its tenth year as a separate Urban District. The period under review has not been marked by any special feature, but progress has been made in improving the sanitary condition of the district.

### HOUSE ACCOMMODATION.

Inspection of the house accommodation continues to be made, and your attention has been called from time to time to houses in a bad condition. Generally improvements have been made voluntarily and it has not been necessary to take proceedings under the Housing of the Working Classes Acts. A few houses in the lowest parts of the valley are—as I mentioned in my Annual Report for 1902—liable at times to flooding of the cellars, rendering the houses very damp. This appears to depend on whether the dam is closed and the mill is working or not.

The number of new houses during 1904 was 4, all the plans thereof being submitted for the approval of the District Council. The number was 4 in 1903, and 1 in 1902.

### SEWERAGE AND DRAINAGE.

Considerable progress has been made towards the provision of a complete system of sewers and Sewage Disposal Works. A provisional agreement for the purchase of a site for the sewage disposal works,  $7\frac{1}{2}$  acres, at Dunkirk, for £2,100, was signed at the September meeting of the Council, and complete plans and specifications for the sewerage of the Town and the sewerage disposal works have been prepared by G. P. Milnes, Esq., Assoc. M.Inst.C.E. In April last the Council unanimously resolved to apply to the Local Government Board for permission to borrow £15,000 for carrying out the scheme. The proposed main effluent carrier discharges into the stream outside the boundaries of the Urban District, and some delay has been caused in the holding of the Local Government Board Inquiry owing to the three months' notice of such works which has to be given under Section 32 of the Public Health Act, 1875. Still further delay was caused by an alteration in the plans whereby it was proposed to discharge the effluent lower down the stream, below Merrett's Mill. The final notice was published in the local papers of the 18th November, and will expire during next month. At a vestry meeting, held on the 3rd November, it was unanimously resolved to apply for an Order to confer on the Urban District Council the powers of a vestry whereby the Council could rate owners of small tenements instead of occupiers. Whether the Council will avail themselves of these powers will be decided at their next meeting.

Further minor improvements in house drainage have been made, and it is to be hoped that when the general system of sewers is complete more attention will be given to internal sanitary arrangements.

In many parts of the district the "privy vault" still obtains and will obtain until owners of houses realise the danger of polluting the subsoil and underground water by masses of decomposing organic refuse below the ground.

### REFUSE DISPOSAL.

The contract of the refuse collector was renewed at the March meeting of the Council for 22/6 a week. It is worthy of note that in tendering the contractor remarked that there was three times as much refuse to be collected as seven years ago. Considerable difficulty was experienced in finding a suitable place for "dumping" the refuse, but it was finally arranged with the owner of the "W" Quarry that it should be used as a scavenger's tip on the Council agreeing to accept responsibility for any accident. The Council later decided to rent the Quarry so that they may have the tip under their own control.

### WATER SUPPLY.

Owing to the moderate rainfall during 1904 the local springs did not yield so abundantly as in 1903, and the Walkley Wood spring dried up completely. On this spring some 15 houses depend for their water supply, and failing this the inhabitants have to carry water from a spring a quarter of a mile away, though 9 occupiers were allowed to use a private well with pump near the spring. But in any case, this spring cannot be considered a satisfactory supply, as before the water reaches the spout in the road it flows some 150-170 yards in an open ditch at the side of fields accessible to cattle. On my report to the Council a Committee was appointed to consider the matter, and on their representation it was decided to request the Stroud Water Company to extend their mains to Walkley Wood. This the Company has agreed to do, and will, I am informed, execute the necessary work in the spring of this year.

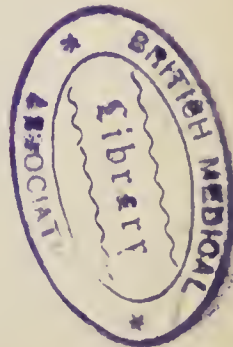
The number of connections with the mains of the Stroud Water Company in this District has increased as follows:—


Jan. 1901 ...	146	(excluding Forest Green).
" 1902 ...	239	
" 1903 ...	261	
" 1904 ...	275	
" 1905 ...	288	= 36.1 p.c. of houses.

(For the number of houses connected I am indebted to the courtesy of the present and late Secretaries of the Stroud Water Company.)

### DAIRIES, COWSHEDS AND MILKSHOPS.

There has been no change in the number of dairies, &c., on the register, though one which was not entirely satisfactory has changed hands and will it is to be hoped be better kept in future. I again had occasion to call the attention of one milkseller to the fact that milk vessels must not be kept in a slaughter house. As I stated last year, too great care cannot be exercised in the collec-





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tion and storage of milk, for of all food stuffs milk is that most susceptible to its surroundings. The same care must be taken of the condition of milk vessels and the storage of milk in the home.

Adoption by this Council of the Regulations with respect to Dairies, Cowsheds and Milk-shops, in force in the adjoining Rural District, would probably have a beneficial effect generally on the condition of these places and of milk vessels.

SLAUGHTER HOUSES.

There has been little improvement in these places. At one the fasting lair is in the slaughter house, and animals kept there can see the killing and dressing of other animals.

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS.

The number of workshops on the register is 20, of which 3 are bakehouses. These have been inspected from time to time, and the attention of occupiers has been called to defects which have all been remedied.

BYE LAWS.

No Bye-laws have yet been adopted, but I understand that the matter is still receiving the attention of the Council, and that bye-laws, similar to those now in force in the adjoining Rural District, will ultimately be adopted by this Council. I would again suggest that bye-laws with regard to slaughter houses should also be considered.

ANTHRAX.

One case occurred during the year, a cow dying of this disease on the 13th March. The carcase was cremated on the ground (in accordance with the new regulations of the Board of Agriculture) and the usual precautions taken. It is worthy of note that a case occurred in the same field two years previously (4th April, 1902), and the carcase was—as customary at that time—buried in lime. This field is the site proposed for the sewage disposal works.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

The total number of cases notified during the year was 17—Scarlet Fever 2, Diphtheria 13, and Erysipelas 2.

The Infectious Diseases Notification Act of 1889 was adopted in the Stroud Rural District (which up to 10th Nov., 1894, included the area of the Nailsworth Urban District) on the 13th Dec., 1889. From the records thus available I have extracted the numbers of cases that have occurred in the area, now the Nailsworth Urban District, and give them below.

	Smallpox	Scarlet Fever	Diphtheria	Typhoid Fever	Erysipelas	Puerperal Fever	Total
1890	—	8	13	—	3	—	24
1891	—	5	4	—	6	—	15
1892	—	6	4	1	4	—	15
1893	1	3	2	1	7	1	15
1894	—	4	1	1	7	—	13
1895	—	—	—	2	1	—	3
1896	2	4	—	1	4	—	11
1897	—	2	—	—	6	—	8
1898	—	1	—	1	2	—	4
1899	—	4	2	1	6	1	14
1900	—	5	72*	—	2	—	79
1901	—	—	23	—	—	—	23
1902	—	—	3	1	—	—	4
1903	—	2	14	—	—	—	16
1904	—	2	13	—	2	—	17
Totals	3	46	151	9	50	2	261

\*excluding 15 cases removed from Rural District.

The most striking point in this table is the epidemic of diphtheria in 1900 and 1901. Cases occurred each year in the first five years of notification, and then for four years the district was free from the disease. Since 1899 cases have occurred every year, though of the 13 cases this year, 8 were members of a family of nine. Several of them were very mild cases, and were detected only by bacteriological examination. This is a good instance of the value of this method of detecting otherwise unrecognised cases, and shows how useful these examinations are in preventing the spread of diphtheria by such cases. For this reason the number of cases is probably much smaller than it would otherwise have been.

Another interesting feature in the table is the small number of cases of typhoid fever.

Since 1889 there has been but one case, that of a lady who probably contracted the disease in South Africa. The total case rate is less than those for the Stroud Urban and Rural Districts, but exceeds those for 8 of the Civil Parishes in the Stroud Union.

While erysipelas caused 48 cases between 1889 and 1900, for three years there were none. Two cases occurred last year. The case rate for this disease from 1890-1904 was considerably higher than that for any other parish in the Union.

ISOLATION HOSPITAL.

The Joint Isolation Hospital for this and the Urban and Rural Districts of Stroud was opened in December, and the first case to be admitted was one of diphtheria from this District for the 29th December. It is most sincerely to be hoped that the full use of this Hospital, aided by bacteriological diagnosis, together with the efficient scheme of sewerage and sewage disposal and improved water supply—either by protection of local supplies or extension of a safe public supply—will considerably diminish notifiable diseases. Your District is to be congratulated on being connected with so well-equipped an Isolation Hospital.

VITAL STATISTICS.

The population of the District estimated on the rate of increase during the decennium (1891-1901) was 3,039 at the middle of 1904, and it is on this figure that the various rates have been calculated.

BIRTHS.

The number of births during the year was 64 — 30 males and 34 females — of which number 1 was illegitimate. The birth rate is 21.1, slightly lower than the average of the last eight years (22.0), but slightly higher than those in the Stroud Urban and Rural Districts. The rate in 1903 was 27.0, the highest recorded.

DEATHS.

The number of deaths registered in the District was 37, a rate of 12.2 per 1,000. Nine persons died in public institutions beyond the District, viz., 3 in the Stroud Union Workhouse, 4 in the Stroud General Hospital, and 2 in the County Asylum. The net number of deaths of persons belonging to the District is 46—24 males and 22 females—an annual rate per 1,000 of 15.1, which is almost exactly the average for the past eight years (15.2). The rate corrected for sex and age distribution of the population becomes 13.4. The rate for England and Wales was 16.2 and those for the neighbouring Stroud Rural and Urban Districts (similarly corrected) were 11.5 and 11.2 respectively. 43.5 per cent. of the deaths occurred above the age of 65 years as compared with 24.6 per cent. for England and Wales (1902).

DEATHS UNDER ONE YEAR OF AGE.

There was only one death of an infant under the age of one year, giving a very low infantile mortality of 16. The average rate for the previous eight years was 79. I must here repeat the caution I have given in previous years that general conclusions drawn from rates calculated on such small figures are of little if any value, though so far as they go the above low rates are distinctly satisfactory.

DEATHS NOT CERTIFIED BY A MEDICAL CERTIFICATE

These were four in number (8.7 per cent. of total deaths), inquests being held in each case, with the following verdicts:—

1. m. 46. Died very suddenly from natural causes, probably heart failure.
2. m. 1 $\frac{3}{4}$ . Found dead in bed, having died from natural causes, probably bronchitis.
3. m. 40. Found dead in the water, having probably fallen in whilst in a fit. Suffocated.
4. f. 39. Died very suddenly from sudden failure of the heart's action.

I append the usual tables of statistics, and in conclusion beg to thank you for the continued support you have given me.

I remain, Gentlemen,

Your obedient Servant,

(Signed) J. MIDDLETON MARTIN,  
B.A., M.D., B.C., D.P.H., &c.,  
Medical Officer of Health.

